

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 02579 01 OF 02 091834Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----009236 091837Z /41

O P 091517Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8662
INFO AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 2579

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EXDIS

FOR DICK MOOSE FROM DICK MATHERON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: E A I D
SUBJECT: WOLLO FAMINE EMERGENCY

REF: STATE 146506

1. YOUR MESSAGE WAS WELCOME AND COINCIDES WITH OUR IN-
HOUSE DELIBERATIONS HERE PROMPTED IN PART BY CRS'S
REQUEST TO AID/W FOR FUNDS TO MOUNT AN AIRLIFT OF RELIEF
FOODSTUFFS TO ASMARA (ADDIS 2560). IT OFFERS AN OPPOR-
TUNITY FOR REITERATING USG READINESS TO RESPOND TO
PMGSE'S HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS BY CONTRIBUTING
TO ITS FAMINE CONTROL EFFORTS.

2. IN RECENT YEARS, I.E., SINCE FAMINE EMERGENCY OF
1973-4 ENDED, US HAS NOT CONTRIBUTED RELIEF FOOD
DIRECTLY TO PMGSE ON BILATERAL BASIS. US HAS CONTRIBUTED
SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF FOOD THROUGH WORLD FOOD FOR PEACE,
UNICEF, AND CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE. THESE INTERMEDIARIES
WERE USED BECAUSE THEY REDUCED DIRECT USAID MANAGEMENT
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AND MONITORING RESPONSIBILITIES AND LENT SUPPORT TO WELL-
DEVELOPED PROGRAM MECHANISMS WHICH THESE ORGANIZATIONS
HAD DEVELOPED IN COOPERATION WITH PMGSE. WHILE SOUND
FROM A PROGRAMMATIC AND MANAGEMENT POINT OF VIEW, THIS
INDIRECT APPROACH DOES NOT ALWAYS GAIN US A GREAT DEAL
OF POLITICAL CREDIT. TECHNICALLY SOPHISTICATED OFFI-
CIALS, SUCH AS RELIEF COMMISSIONER SHIMELIS ADUGNA AND

FINANCE MINISTER TEFERRA WOLDE-SEMAIT, ARE WELL AWARE THAT THROUGH COMBINATION DIRECT AND INDIRECT MEANS US HAS BEEN THE MAJOR RELIEF/REHABILITATION DONOR TO ETHIOPIA SINCE 1973. SHIMELIS STATED THAT FRANKLY TO CONGRESSMAN TSONGAS DURING LATTER'S VISIT IN DECEMBER. BUT HIGHER LEVEL PMAC MEMBERS, FAR REMOVED FROM TECHNICAL DETAILS AND UNTUTORED IN THE INTRICACIES OF WFP'S, UNICEF'S AND CRS'S SOURCES OF CONTRIBUTIONS, PROBABLY ARE UNAWARE OF THIS. RECENT CONVERSATIONS BY MYSELF WITH MOFA OFFICIALS AND BY LYMAN WITH MINISTER OF FINANCE INDICATE THERE IS DISBELIEF IN UPPER PMAC CIRCLES THAT US IS SERIOUS IN OFFERS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

3. THEREFORE, YOUR PROPOSAL FOR POSSIBLE USG ACTION ON FOOD FOR PEACE FOR ETHIOPIA COULD BE HELPFUL IN GIVING SOME ADDED CREDIBILITY TO US POSITION. IN THIS REGARD, A BILATERAL DONATION, DIRECT TO THE PMGSE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR THE GREATEST POLITICAL IMPACT, RATHER THAN ONLY INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS. FYI - WE ARE PREPARING A NEW ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT STATE OF US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. YOU WILL HAVE IT BY EARLY NEXT WEEK. OUR PRELIMINARY THINKING IS THAT THE ONLY REAL EFFECT WE CAN HAVE ON THE DIRG, WHICH SETS PMGSE DIRECTIONS, IS USG RESPONSE TO TWO KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES: (A) THE US-SOMALI ARMS RELATIONSHIP, AND (B) THE US POSITION ON ARMS TRANSFERS TO ERITREANS FROM STATES WITH WHICH WE

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MIGHT HAVE INFLUENCE. NOTHING ELSE WE DO IS APT TO HAVE MUCH EFFECT.

4. I APPRECIATE YOUR DESIRE NOT TO WAIT UNTIL THE FAO TEAM HAS COMPLETED ITS REPORT. HOWEVER, I AM HESITANT TO SUGGEST THAT THE USG ANNOUNCE A SPECIFIC AMOUNT FOR ITS FOOD CONTRIBUTION BEFORE THE FAO TEAM AT LEAST GETS ON THE GROUND AND OBTAINS SOME INITIAL IMPRESSIONS. SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT COULD UNDERCUT EFFECTIVENESS OF FAO TEAM

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-----009309 091844Z /41

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8663

INFO AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ADDDIS ABABA 2579

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EXDIS

FOR DICK MOOSE FROM DICK MATHERON

IN ASSESSING PRECISE NEEDS AND PARTICULARLY IN PRESSING PMGSE FOR SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS ON TRANSPORTATION, MANAGEMENT, ETC. OF ANY NEW DONOR SHIPMENTS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT PMGSE'S ESTIMATE OF NEED, AROUND 150,000 MT, IS REASONABLY ACCURATE. WITH EXISTING COMMITMENTS OF APPROXIMATELY 70,000 MT FROM VARIOUS DONORS, ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE NEEDED. WE CONCLUDE THEREFORE THAT A US COMMITMENT IN PRINCIPLE MIGHT BE ANNOUNCED NOW, WITH A STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE EXACT AMOUNT WILL BE DETERMINED "ON THE BASIS OF FAO-PMGSE CONSULTATIONS NOW UNDERWAY IN ETHIOPIA. AN AMERICAN FOOD EXPERT IS PARTICIPATING AS PART OF THE FAO TEAM.

5. HOWEVER, IF YOU FEEL IT MORE DESIRABLE TO MAKE SPECIFIC PLEDGE NOW, WE WILL PREPARE ESTIMATES OF APPROPRIATE MAGNITUDE AND TYPE US CONTRIBUTION AND ADVISE YOU IN NEXT FEW DAYS.

6. WITH REGARD TO TRANSPORTATION, RELIEF NEEDS FOR WOLLO ARE BEST TRANSPORTED THROUGH ASSAB. OPENING OF DJIBOUTI
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RR WILL HELP MOST BY RELIEVING ASSAB OF COMMERCIAL GRAIN, FERTILIZER AND OTHER COMMODITIES THAT CONTINUE TO PILE UP AT ASSAB. PMGSE, IN RESPONSE TO WOLLO FAMINE, HAS DRAMATICALLY INCREASED RELIEF FOOD OFFTAKE FROM ASSAB. PMGSE HAS DEVOTED 100 22-TON UNITS FOR INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION WITHIN WOLLO. WE ALSO HAVE INFORMATION PMGSE USING ETHIOPIAN AIR FORCE PILOTS TO FLY DC-3S TO DISTRIBUTE FOOD WITHIN WOLLO. AS OF 5/30/78, PMGSE ADVISES ALL IMPORTED RELIEF GRAINS AT ASSAB HAVE BEEN MOVED OUT. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE WE CAN CERTIFY TRANSPORT CAPACITY WITH RELATIVE CONFIDENCE.

7. WITH REGARD TO LOCUST SITUATION, WE HAVE REPORTED IN ADDIS 2541 THAT REGIONAL DESERT LOCUST CONTROL ORGANIZATION/ EAST AFRICA (DLCO) IS LARGELY ON TOP OF SITUATION. DLCO WOULD OF COURSE WELCOME US CONTRIBUTION FOR REPLENISHMENT PESTICIDE (US ORIGIN) ON BASIS 10,000 LITERS FOR DJIBOUTI, 20,000 FOR SOMALIA, 40,000 FOR ETHIOPIA. US CONTRIBUTION IS DLCO FOR THIS PURPOSE MIGHT BE USEFUL IN TERMS GENERAL RESPONSE TO HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS OF THE HORN. HOWEVER, AS CONTRIBUTION TO REGIONAL ORGANIZATION IT MAY NOT HAVE GREAT POLITICAL IMPACT ON UPPER ECHELONS PMGSE. ASIDE FROM ANY SUCH CONTRIBUTIONS US MAY WISH MAKE TO DLCO, THEREFORE, WE COULD SUGGEST THAT IN OUR ANNOUNCEMENT OF FOOD FOR PEACE FOR ETHIOPIA, WE INDICATE THAT SUCH FOOD IS IN RESPONSE TO BOTH THE WOLLO/TIGRE FAMINE AND THE LOCUST PROBLEM. WE DO NOT YET HAVE ANY REPORTS ON CROP DAMAGE FROM LOCUSTS, BUT WE CAN ASSUME THERE WILL BE SOME AND THAT IF DEPARTMENT SO WISHES THE FOOD CONTRIBUTION CAN BE ANNOUNCED IN TERMS OF BOTH WOLLO/TIGRE AND POTENTIAL RELIEF NEEDS FROM LOCUST DAMAGE.

8. IN MAKING ANNOUNCEMENT, IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO DO IT
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THROUGH FORMAL DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO MOFA, AS WELL AS THROUGH NORMAL AID CHANNELS, IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT ON PMAC.

9. USAID DIRECTOR LYMAN CURRENTLY SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH RELIEF COMMISSIONER SHIMELIS. LYMAN WILL SOUND OUT SHIMELIS ON NATURE OF PMGSE APPEAL FOR FOOD, I.E., WHETHER PMGSE PREPARED TO MAKE DIRECT APPEAL TO US AND OTHER DONORS RATHER THAN ONLY GOING THROUGH FAO. LYMAN WILL SUGGEST US MIGHT BE RESPONSIVE TO DIRECT APPEAL TO US, WITH POSSIBLE BILATERAL PROVISION FOOD. ADVISE BY NIACT IMMEDIATE IF SUCH DIRECT APPEAL BY PMGSE NOT ADVISABLE, I.E., IF USG NOT LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND. WOULD NOT WANT TO RAISE PMGSE HOPES ONLY TO DASH THEM.

10. PLEASE ADVISE IF ANY FURTHER INFORMATION NEEDED.
MATHERON

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